

WOMEN WORTH WHILE.

THEIR INTERESTS, FRIVOLITIES AND HOBBIES.

MRS. T. H. CARAWAY.



HARRIS EWING ©

"Mamma," said Paul, the elder of the two little sons of Representative and Mrs. T. H. Caraway, after hearing President Wilson read a message to Congress, "the President forgot to mention the most important thing of all."

"What was that?" asked his mother.

"Why, he didn't give the number of his house," answered Paul, solemnly. Then, seeing the mystified look on his parent's face, he added:

"Didn't you tell me we were going to the Capitol to hear the President give his address?"

"This was probably a very natural mistake for my little son, or of any child to make," laughs Mrs. Caraway in recounting the story. "The fact remains, however, that the congressman's child frequently lives in a state of mental confusion. We have heard a great deal about what the poor congressman's wife endures when she comes from a small town, where everybody was either a relative or an intimate friend, and enters upon the loneliness of her first Washington season. Also, harrowing tales are told about the petty economies she must practice in order to rear a family on her husband's salary."

"If one accepted these stories literally, one would finally come to believe that any woman who stands for her husband's making a race for Congress is performing a patriotic service to the country. But nothing is ever said about the congressman's child. Now, of the two, he has my sympathy every time. When he comes to Washington, he leaves the small boys and girls with whom he has roomed since babyhood. If he is a timid child, the making of new friends is no simple matter. Then, too, he usually exchanges the freedom of a rambling old house and a ten-acre tract of ground for the restrictions of an apartment or a house in a row. If Congress is in session all summer, he is frequently kept in the city during the hot months, getting home just in time to enter school in the fall, and returning to Washington to attend another school just as he has gotten into the swing of things at home."

"In pointing out these disadvantages, however, I do not mean that the existence of the congressman's child is without a ray of sunshine. On the other hand, there are wonderful compensations. Washington as the capital of the nation offers a hundred and one delights and advantages to every creature, male and female. Any mother must be glad for her children to have the opportunities which it affords."

Mrs. Caraway is comparatively a newcomer in Washington, having entered the congressional life here less than a year ago. At her home in Jonesboro, a progressive Arkansas town of 10,000 people, she was an active member of the "National Century Club," an organization which is federated with the national body of women's clubs, and which has done a valuable work along civic, philanthropic and educational lines for its community. In Washington, Mrs. Caraway is a member of the Congressional Club. Her husband is on the District committee of the House, and both have taken a deep interest in municipal affairs at the capital.

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THE EVENING STORY.

A COLD MORNING.

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Minerva Marsh had been restless with cold all night. Toward morning she fell into deep slumber, from which she was aroused by the 7 o'clock whistles blowing. The sounds told Minerva that a cold wave had arrived. But 7 o'clock was her rising time in winter, and, snatching up her clothes, she hurried into the next room, where there was a stove, to dress. The room was like an icebox. For the fire had gone out.

In the icy atmosphere Minerva went about, reconstructing the fire. But it was a long time before she was aware that her fingers were anything more than so many icicles.

She lived alone in her tiny old house, which was all the property she owned. She sowed for a few people and so paid her taxes and bought food and fuel of the scantiest proportions. It was not her fault that she had been born proud or that one by one her relatives had died and her friends withdrawn until she was practically alone in the world. Of charity there was abundance, but she would not accept charity.

After a while the fire got to burning, and Minerva found the water pipe was frozen. She had no hot water, but she lit the lamp and set two flatirons to heating, and went to work. It was an hour before the first drip of water issued from the faucet. She had accomplished her task without bursting the pipe or calling in a plumber.

"Now," said Minerva, aloud, "I'll just brew me a pot of tea and get right at my sewing. There's just a little bit more to Mrs. Sands' black serge before she comes after it at noon."

For a week she had been looking forward to finishing the black serge and getting her pay for it. Mrs. Sands was a good customer, who always paid promptly. And Minerva greatly needed the money. The coal was all but out, the kerosene can empty, and a tax drawing near. The \$4 which she would receive from Mrs. Sands would go far toward setting her at ease until she earned more money.

She had just sat down with her cup of steaming hot tea, her numb feet on the stove hearth, and her shawl-wrapped body beginning to feel the inspiration of warmth, when there came a knock at the door. The frosty bolt stung Minerva's fingers, and the door creaked and squeaked with cold before she got it open and saw the face of the smallest Sands girl.

"Why, good morning, Suey," said Minerva. "Come in. It's a very cold morning, isn't it?"

"I don't feel cold," said the child. "And I can't come in 'cause it's so school time. Ma sent me to tell you that she can't come after her dress today, and you needn't hurry to finish it. It's like she said she's got one of her attacks, and it'll be a week probably before she's up and around again."

"That's too bad," Minerva murmured. She drew her old shawl close, feeling less the cold than the chill of disappointment. "I'm sorry she's sick," she said. "She went back to her tea and her glowing stove. She sat down again and took up her cup with fingers that trembled a little."

"It's a very cold morning," she said to herself, dully.

Her morning tea, usually so cheering a beverage, was as flat and ineffectual as mere hot water. Her toast stuck in her throat. She realized that there was a lump there which would not admit her swallowing. She sat looking about the room. It was such a poor bare room, and in the midst of it stood her darling, her scarlet geranium, dead. Somehow as she looked at the blackened plant it came to her that the last bit of brightness had passed out of her life forever.

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given to Minerva. The other she kept for herself.

"Let's see which keeps here longest," she had said.

Clarissa was no great hand with flowers, and doubtless her geranium had died long ago, but Minerva had nursed hers faithfully. So the plant grew perennially, youthful and vigorous. Now it was dead and Minerva felt a sense of loss.

She did her morning tasks. All her movements were quick, dainty, precise, as befitted a small and very lightly built woman. She had never been pretty and long since she had lost the charm youth briefly bestows, but fifty years of right living and gentle, if narrow, thinking had given to her plain face a wonderful



SHE BEGAN TO UNPACK THE BASKET.

sweetness and clearness of expression. With less reserve she might still have been an active woman.

But for all her tidiness Minerva could not bear to throw away the frozen geranium. She sat down to sew with it upon the table beside her. She sewed half-heartedly, for the serge dress was the only thing she had to work upon and there was no longer urgent need to finish it.

The room was not very warm. She was sitting, dull and miserable, troubled by many problems, when for the second time some one knocked at the door. She was quite certain that she knew who it was. Her next-door neighbor sometimes ran in of a morning to see how she fared over night. So Minerva, without rising, simply called out, "Come in!"

The door opened slowly, and Mrs. Minerva's astonished eyes saw a basket and next a woman wearing a man's fur coat and muffled in furs. Minerva sprang up, letting her sewing fall. For this was no neighbor of hers.

"How do you do?" said the woman, cheerily. "I can't see anything clearly, but I think I'll come in. I'll get my head unwound." She set the basket down and attacked the veil.

"It's Clarissa Penn," gasped Minerva.

"Sure, it's Clarissa Penn," the woman said. "I'm so glad to see you, said Minerva."

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era. "I've been thinking of you all the morning."

"Well, if that don't beat all I've been thinking of you," Clarissa cried. "And as soon as breakfast was over I made my men folks hitch up for me and I hiked for town. Cold or no cold, I was bound to see you today. My sakes, your geranium got froze last night, too!"

"Did-did yours?" asked Minerva.

"I should say it did. When I got up this morning it was the limpest thing you ever saw. The fire went out in the kitchen last night and for me and I hiked for town. Cold or no cold, I was bound to see you today. My sakes, your geranium got froze last night, too!"

"I thought you'd forgotten all about me," quavered Minerva.

Clarissa hung her head. "Well, I've been pretty busy, you know, Minerva. But I've come to take dinner with you today, and thinking you might not be prepared for company such cold weather, I brought along a few things. I had a soapstone and I put the basket right on it so things wouldn't freeze."

She dumped out her coat and began to unpack the basket. There were big, red apples, a whole chicken ready for the kettle, a small jar of butter, a can of cream, a sack of big white eggs and a strip of home-cured bacon.

Minerva's lips quivered, for she was hungry, and when she had seen so many good things together at one time? Somehow taking from Clarissa did not seem like taking from anybody else. Still she demurred. "You needn't have done it," she said.

"I know that, my dear, well enough. But it's my way when I go visiting unexpectedly, and I thought you wouldn't mind. We're good as sisters, anyway." She laughed heartily, but her eyes were a little dim. Perhaps she saw more than she appeared to see, after all. "And there's a bundle of dress goods I just threw in. I thought maybe if you wasn't too busy you'd run up two or three everyday dresses. It's so hard to get anybody to take a stitch for you nowadays. My girls need some work done, too. There, now, Minerva, I'll just draw up to your nice fire and warm my feet. It's an awful cold morning. Maybe it was. But for Minerva a thousand suns seemed shining and all the birds between heaven and earth seemed to be singing their gladdest.

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